

2018 Ophea Award and Legacy Fund Recipient Biographies

Ophea Award for Outstanding Contribution Recipient: Thomas Doherty

Thomas Doherty's exemplary contribution to the lives of children and youth in health and physical education, advocacy, and community development began over 30 years ago. In 1984, Thomas began his career as a hockey coach for the Vermilion Bay Minor Hockey Association. Within a few years, Thomas' role grew from coach to Team Executive, Vice-President, and then President of the Association. Thomas transitioned to the Vermilion Bay Minor Baseball League in 1988 where he would lead as coach for fourteen years, and President for three years.

Thomas' teaching career began in 2006 at Peetabeck Academy, transitioning in 2007 to St. John School where he is currently teaching today. In addition to teaching, in 2016 Thomas entered the role of Student Retention Lead at Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education.

Over his thirty years of working and volunteering in the physical education field, Thomas has been the recipient of various awards including; the Prime Minister's Olympic Torch Award for Volunteerism, Chukuni Communities Development Corporation's Citizen of the Year Award, and the Governor General of Canada's Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers. Serving as an Ontario Catholic Teacher's Association Kenora Unit Health & Safety Representative, Thomas has also supported and initiated various programs for schools (including Ophea's Healthy Schools Certification) that encourages all children and youth to participate in safe, active, and engaging activities.

Thomas' outstanding contributions in the field extend from sport and recreation to student and community engagement. As a counsellor, chairperson, local basketball team bus driver, grade 1 Peetabeck camp leader, and more, Thomas exemplifies what it means to be a dedicated educator who knows how to motivate students. Committed to making a positive impact in students' lives, Thomas' expertise and experiences have demonstrated his strive for excellence in and outside the classroom.

Award of Distinction Recipient: Ken Leang

Ken Leang has been involved in the field of education, programming, and community development for twenty years. His teaching career began in 2000 as a kindergarten teacher at Rose Avenue Public School in the Toronto District School Board. From there, Ken embarked onto various roles, including; teaching at the Canadian International School of Hong Kong, being the Special Education Resource Lead and Technology Lead at Highgate PS and Oscar Peterson PS, and becoming an H&PE and Well-Being Curriculum Consultant for the York Region District School Board (YRDSB). In 2016, Ken

transitioned to Education Officer for the Ontario Ministry of Education where he oversaw the Healthy Schools Unit, Safe and Healthy Schools Branch, and Indigenous Education and Well-Being Division. In 2017, Ken was hired on as a Vice Principal in the YRDSB.

Moreover, while working at the Ministry of Education Ken co-led the development of Ontario's revised Daily Physical Activity (DPA) Policy Memorandum, worked with the "Support and Monitoring Visits" team to hold collaborative conversations with 72 Ontario school boards, and has assisted in Ontario-wide online interactive workshops. Ken has also supported a number of Ophea's projects - in particular, the development of Ophea's *DPA Every Day* resource and H&PE curriculum resources.

Ken's experience working in school communities, boards, and the Ministry of Education has allowed him to reach many students and their families across Ontario. As a leader and advocate in health and well-being for children and youth, Ken uses creative and innovative approaches to share information and build capacity with others. He has worked with many system leaders, administrators, educators, students, and their families to challenge their thinking and to succeed to the best of their abilities.

Ken works endlessly to support educators across Ontario in developing effective teaching practices not just in H&PE but in all curriculum areas. In all of his work, Ken prompts thinking, keeps conversations grounded, takes a fresh approach, and overcomes any challenge, while always putting student well-being first. Ken inspires educators to value the importance of creating schools that are welcoming, diverse, and happy places where students can go to learn, connect and build healthy, active lives.

Deb Courville Education Fund Recipient: Erica Dugas

Erica Dugas is a secondary teacher at St. Edmund Campion Secondary School in the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. Her passion for teaching has been driven by positive experiences she had with motivating and influential teachers. Determined to pursue a teaching career, Erica was reminded of the teachers who made an impact in her life and today works to inspire her students the way she was inspired by so many great teachers.

In addition to teaching at St. Edmund Campion, Erica facilitates various professional development workshops and physical education programs, bringing hundreds of students together to participate in cooperative games, ensuring inclusion, and respect to help reduce the prevalence of youth violence. Having coordinated and facilitated the Niagara Unity Games, worked for the Brock Niagara Penguins (a group serving persons with physical disabilities), and travelled to El Salvador to research the effect of sport and health, Erica's experiences have led her to gain knowledge on the potential of sport to improve social conditions in her community.

Through positive sport and education initiatives, Erica encourages students to become strong leaders in their communities, empowering them to improve their physical fitness and overall quality of life. In the future she hopes to develop a sport and physical activity program that provides opportunities to teach civic responsibility, life skills, health, and physical education.